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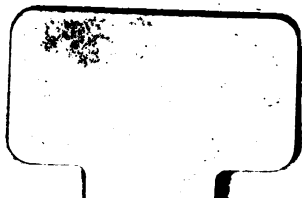
MEMOIR
OF
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A BRIEF RELATION
OF THE
MERCIES OF THE LORD,
IN PROVIDENCE AND GRACE,
TO
WILLIAM WESTHORP.

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue."—PSALM lxi. 16, 17.

Some boast of their superior birth,
And of their pedigree;
Their great possessions, too, on earth,
But 'tis not so with me.



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INTRODUCTION.

DEAR SPIRITUAL READER,

There is something very humbling in taking a view of the Lord's gracious dealings towards us. Moses told literal Israel—"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no" (Deut. viii. 2). Also "Specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children" (Deut. iv. 10). Again, "And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up" (Deut. xi. 19).

Thus I trust it is from a spiritual impulse

that I have sent into the world this brief account of the Lord's gracious dealings towards the dearly beloved late partner of my sorrows and joys. I often felt a desire that he should himself write a little account of the Lord's dealings towards him, but, like most good men, he kept putting it off, and when urged to do so, would often reply, "It is so little worth;" but, as he had left three dear children, one son and two daughters—whom he had often taken to the throne of grace in prayer and supplication that the Lord would put His fear in their hearts, as well as those to whom he felt knitted and united in Church fellowship, having spoken to them of the Word of life—the consideration of these things made me reluctant that some account of all the Lord had brought him through should be forgotten, or unknown.

There were many obstacles in the way, for the painful affliction of rheumatism, that he had laboured under for many years, had greatly weakened the arm, and caused the hand to shake.

In February, 1828, a few months before he was taken with his last attack, I was reading to him the experience of that good man, Mr. James Bourne, how sweet and pleasant the Lord made the self-told tale of a brother's joys and sorrows, and while the tear was trickling down the cheek, I said, "Now let us have a little of what the Lord has done for you." He replied, "I cannot write well." I said, "Though I greatly feel my weakness, yet, the Lord enabling me, I will take

it down from your lips." I did so, and the little account now before you is the result.

Though his abilities were not of the highest order, yet his well-known truthfulness, honesty, firmness, and uprightness, commended him to those that feared God. He was fearful of going beyond his depth; what God showed him that he preached. He had a deep sense of man's ruinous fall, and would often say man was not half but wholly dead. The doctrines of grace he would declare God had sealed upon his heart Himself. The electing love of God was a theme so dear to him; he would say, "This blessed doctrine men reject. O Blessed Spirit, let it come nearer to me!" and he repeated the lines of Ryland:—

"Why was I saved and not another?
Why was I called and not my brother?
Lay there in me some excellence
To allure and charm Omnipotence?
Oh no, alas! I differed not
From Adam's other sons in aught
Except in this, I did excel
In serving sin, deserving hell."

A few months before his last attack in 1868, being very feeble, as he was returning from chapel, leaning upon my arm, he suddenly stopped, and, looking at me, said, "My dear, the doctrines of grace and the truths I have been enabled to preach, are dearer to me than ever." I saw such a holy light and pleasure upon his countenance that I cannot easily forget.

Thus have I sent into the world this brief

account of the Lord's gracious dealings with a valuable partner. My husband omitted many trials he passed through in the ministry as they were so complicated, nor did he think they would be edifying to the Church of God. That the God of Israel will condescend to commend this narrative to the hearts of his savingly-taught people is the prayer of his bereaved partner,

TALITHA CUMI WESTHORN.

RELATION.

"Some boast of their superior birth,
And of their pedigree;
Their great possessions, too, on earth :
But 'tis not so with me."

I WAS born on the 5th of June, 1796, at a village called Castle Hedingham, in the county of Essex. Truly I was born unto trouble, to pass through many painful scenes of sorrow and affliction. My parents were very poor, to a great extent the result of my father's misconduct; he treated my mother very unkindly. There were six of us in family, three sons and three daughters, myself being the fifth child.

I recollect, when about six or seven years of age, taking a walk in the hop-grounds. No one was with me, or saw me. Seeing a willow-tree growing close by the brink of a fresh-water river, I thought I should like a bough. As I stood with my back towards a deep spot where men washed, the bough slipped, and I fell backwards into this deep hole, but, as the Lord would have it, I came up by the side of the bank and scrambled out, thus escaping a watery grave, the Lord's eye being upon me for good.

About this time England was at war with France. Provisions were very dear—flour, for

instance, being seven shillings the peck, and we, with many others, were wanting the necessaries of life. One day I and my youngest brother were very hungry, and having no food at home, we agreed to go to Mrs. Coldham's, Pie Corner, and get a loaf, getting it charged to our mother. We did so, and ran to the hop-grounds and ate part of it, hiding the remainder under the hop-binds till the next day; but, alas! when we went for the hidden bread it was gone.

Provisions continuing dear, and we being exceedingly poor, my mother bought fine middlings to mix with the flour. We braided split-straw for bonnets, and sometimes we had no dinner on Saturdays till the work was taken home. My breakfast was usually what we termed, "a mess out of the kettle," which is, bread with the water poured on, and a little salt.

One morning, sitting by the fire, my mother accidentally knocked the kettle over, severely scalding my leg. Father became so enraged that he broke the kettle into pieces; thus my poor mother had her burnt child and no kettle, and it was some time before she could purchase another. Shortly afterwards my father came home at night in a terrible fit of ill temper. My mother being naturally quiet, and of weak nerves, could not stay in the house. As she was going to a neighbour's her foot slipped, she fell, and was brought in with a broken leg. Oh, reader! how painful are the effects of sin!

As I have already observed, my parents were very poor, so of course I received but little educa-

tion, nor do I recollect any of the family going to school but myself, and that was to a dame's school. The woman's name was Smith. I next went to that kept by a Mrs. Jonas, and afterwards to the National School. The master's name was Howard. I learned to read tolerably well, but did not learn to write, till it pleased the Lord to lay eternal realities heavily upon my mind.

As my mother was a very sensitive woman, my father's treatment of her greatly affected her health. She also lost by death a daughter named Lydia. I think she was eighteen years of age. Nothing seemed to assuage her grief. Mother would sometimes go to the stairs door and call her, though she knew Lydia was dead, and when she went to shopping she would go far out of her way rather than pass the churchyard. It pleased the Lord soon to remove my mother by death, and I was placed, with my eldest sister, out to work at braiding.

The following spring my father sent a letter, saying he had a situation for me at East Ham, in Essex, at a public house, called "The Cock." I went by the wagon from Hedingham, father promising to meet me at Ilford, which I should have to pass through, but he over-slept himself. Arriving in London, I was put down at Leadenhall Market. Of course my father was not there to meet me, and the man who drove the wagon, whose name was Jarvis, pulled me out with oaths and curses, and bade me be off about my business. I cried bitterly, never having gone far from home before, at being set

down in that great metropolis, and knowing no one, it was more than I knew how to bear. Recovering myself a little, and wiping away my tears, I proceeded on my journey, asking nearly every one I met the way to East Ham. Some passed by and would not answer me, others consoled with me; but the Lord protected me, and I got safe to my new situation. When my master and mistress saw me, they were much displeased with my father, for they saw I was not a lad that would suit them. I was then, I think, about thirteen years of age. Having had the ague, and but scanty food, I was a pale, weakly lad, not at all fit for the place. I stayed there several weeks and was then taken ill. My father having left his parish, my master knew not where to write to him; but he was very kind to me, and procured me a conveyance in a large wagon, besides giving me eight shillings. Thus far the merciful kindness of the Lord had been over me.

The following month a letter came, saying my father had work for me and my brother at Laindon Hills, in Essex, hoeing of beans. We went to the overseer, and he gave us sufficient money to go with. We slept at Chelmsford the first night, at the "Greyhound," near Shire Hall. The next day, passing through Billericay, we arrived at Laindon Hills. I had not been there long before I witnessed the painful scene of my father's marriage with an immoral woman. This brought him into great trouble. Sleeping in the next room, I heard him cry, while in great bodily pain, "God be merciful to me a poor, miserable

sinner." Dear reader, God hath not said in vain, "The way of transgressors is hard." When my father recovered, he still followed the same sinful course of life.

Again being out of employment, and winter approaching, we were taken home to our parish, but my father, being of a roving disposition, the spring following took me and my youngest brother with him to Rochford. It was some time before we could obtain work. I remember my father taking the last shilling out of his purse; he said, "We shall have to go home now." That very day we got work at Fleet Hall, on the road between Rochford and Great Wakering.

Shortly after this, Mr. Millions, a baker, came to the "Old Ship," where I lodged, and said he wanted a lad. The landlady recommended me. I went to my new place at Southend, and stayed a year. Forming an acquaintance with the sailor boys, I there learned to dance, break the Sabbath, and many grievous sins, which often to this day cause me to cry unto God, "Remember not against me the sins of my youth."

From thence I went to Rochford and Rayleigh, and lived with a Mr. Burkin. There also I had many sins to secretly lament—telling lies, and vain and sinful amusements. At this place I was one day charged with not having given the horse any water. I said I had done so. They showed me the pail, in proof that it had not had any in. I still persisted in asserting the falsehood. How true is it as soon as we are born we go astray, speaking lies. Nevertheless I had

many convictions in this place, nor could I sin with ease as formerly.

I continued in the baking trade for three or four years, and was then again out of a situation. On my way to Billericay, Mr. Johnson, a horse doctor, saw me, and asked, "Do you want a place?" I said, "Yes," so he recommended me to Dr. Deranders, at Billericay. There I stayed a year, and had much cause to lament over my awful state as a sinner. Also here, blessed be God, did conviction for sin seize me, never finally to leave me.

At this place I had a marvellous deliverance from a dog. As the animal was loose, I went after him to put him into his kennel, and inadvertently trod upon his foot. In great fury he sprang at my leg, and got me down. I struggled, lying on him as well as I could, and thrust my two hands into his mouth, holding the upper and lower jaws. I called out for help, which mercifully soon came—a man, named Stock, running to my rescue. Thus did the Lord preserve me from being torn to pieces or seriously hurt, save my leg and both wrists being marked by the dog's long teeth.

Soon afterwards I began to be seriously impressed with thoughts of death, and conviction for sin so troubled me, that at times I was very dejected. One night there was a very heavy thunderstorm, and, being alone, I greatly feared and trembled. The lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, and the flashes of a guilty conscience filled me with dread. There was a fair about to

take place at Billericay. I told the Lord in my simple way that if he would spare my life, I would not go to the fair; but when it came, I had no power to withstand the temptation, although conscience testified against me. When I entered the dancing-room I was so conscience-stricken that I could not take that pleasure in it as heretofore, the thought of a never-ending eternity filling me with dread.

I resolved that I would try and be religious, and do all I could to merit the favour of God. I took to reading the Word of God, particularly the New Testament. Sometimes I felt a melting of spirit in reading of the sufferings of Christ. At this time I thought I would double my diligence in going to church, and pay all the attention I could, for I thought there was no true religion only in the Church of England. I recollect once hearing Mr. Syer, the minister, preach from these words—"Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." I thought the words were full of meaning, but I was so ignorant I could not understand them. What could the text mean? "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Shortly afterwards I was standing one day in my "mother church" at Rayleigh, and was looking round with admiration. Three little boys, dressed in white, were standing on either side of the organ, and the minister, wearing his white and black gown, presented to my mind a solemn and grand appearance. I was very much delighted. "Oh!" I said, "this is the place!" Alas! for the awful blindness of the

carnal mind. But my fears and anxiety still increasing, I ventured to go to the Baptist Chapel in the evening, and when the minister, Mr. P., was praying, I felt such melting contrition as I had never before experienced.

The following year I removed to Rochford, and took lodgings with a man named Bodgen. He was a quiet man, but knew nothing about the eternal interests of the soul, and seeing me deeply concerned about the state of my soul, he said he would read "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress" to me, and explain it. Poor man, at that time he was as ignorant of the true spiritual meaning of the book as I was. I told him I thought they were dreams and visions that Bunyan saw. His wife opposed me. Seeing me very anxiously reading the Word of God, she would ridicule, and say I was so holy. One morning, when at breakfast, I was reading the New Testament; she snatched it away in a rage, and endeavoured afterwards to draw me into sin, but the Lord preserved me. I soon removed and took fresh lodgings.

About this time I began driving the night mail for Mr. Goodman, of Billericay. I left Rochford at six every evening; the distance to Ingatestone was twenty-two miles, making it a journey of forty-four miles. But wherever I went I took my burden of guilt, and the thought and fear of being lost. I was exceedingly ignorant. I knew nothing of religion, neither theoretically nor experimentally—how God could save a sinner, only I would think it was by Jesus Christ.

One day Mr. Bodgen said to me, "William, we have such a nice minister at our chapel to-day." I thought I would go, as I could not get rid of my burden by going to church; so I went to the Independent Chapel at Rochford. Here I was greatly delighted. I thought the minister was so kind and had such a pleasant countenance, and the people so happy and comfortable.

About this time, in 1819, I married a young person who had been brought up a Roman Catholic, which I may have cause presently to refer to. As I felt so united to the people I left the Church of England and said, "Surely this is the place!" and they, seeing me a constant attendant and very attentive, thought much of me. I soon proposed to become a member of the chapel. One of the oldest members told me when I approached the table I must go to the bottom and look up to the minister as if I was looking to Christ. I thought I would not have minded going under the table if I could have found ease from my burden. I have thought since, who can describe the blindness of the mind when without spiritual life! Thus I went on in this way many months, and thought I was a wonderful Christian, the people being as pleased with me as I was with my religion, and when I proposed, as I have already said, to become a member, they very readily consented; nor do I recollect they asked me any questions how I came by my religion. As for a law work upon the conscience, I believe they were as ignorant of it as I was myself. The Lord was pleased, in His own time, to gradually

deepen the work in my soul, by laying sin upon my conscience as a heavy burden. The terrors of the Almighty were upon me, plunging me almost in despair. So low did I sink under the burden of sin, that I feared it would sink me to eternal perdition. How well did Mr. Hart's hymn describe my case (the 43rd):—

“Lord, when thy Spirit descends to show
The badness of our hearts,
Astonished at the amazing view
The soul with horror starts!

“The dungeon opening, foul as hell—

(I felt the same)—

Its loathsome stench emits,
And brooding in each secret cell
Some hideous monster sits.

“Swarms of ill thoughts their bane diffuse,
Proud, envious, false, unclean,
And every ransacked corner shows
Some unsuspected sin.”

How feelingly was I made to know the truthfulness of the 6th verse:—

“None less than God's Almighty Son
Can move such loads of sin;
The water from his side must run
To wash this dungeon clean.”

I still drove the night mail, and my distress and terrors increasing, I was often compelled to drive the horse on my knees on the foot-board of the cart. I shall not exaggerate, but give as true an account, as the Lord shall enable me, of my affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the

gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. Such was the awful temptations I was labouring under that my soul chose strangling and death rather than life. And many times have I been compelled to drop on my knees and beg of God to preserve me before I dared to take a razor to shave myself. My mind became so impaired that I could not hide it from the world, and the requirements of God's most holy law entering my conscience so affected my bodily frame that my flesh wasted, and I thought, surely he would, as Hezekiah said, cut me off with pining sickness. Some said, Bill, the mailman, was going crazy; and I verily thought I should. Others said I prayed to the horse; and truly, dear reader, I could not conceal my distress nor keep off my knees, for months together, except at intervals, but cry, "Mercy, mercy, have mercy, O Lord! Can there be mercy for me, a poor, guilty sinner?"

I will here mention two things which may extol the riches of sovereign grace in me, a poor, helpless sinner, and show that where the Lord implants divine light, honesty will follow. One night, being so much on my knees, I lost my cushion. My wife presented me with a new one. I said, "Where did you get the hay to stuff it with?" She said, "Out of that man's stack." I threw it down, saying, "I won't have it; it is a theft—it is a theft!" Also, when quite a lad, I contracted a debt with Mr. Leeatrice, at Rochford, for clothes, and left a balance due to him of nine shillings. I went to my creditor nine years

afterwards and asked him if I did not owe him some money? He said he did not know. He looked over his book but could find nothing against me. I said, "I owe you nine shillings, Sir, and there's the money." I mention these facts to show the effect of God's grace upon the heart. Had not the Lord put his fear in my heart the man would not have had his money. I have sometimes mentioned these instances in my feeble ministry, as I have been grieved to see people professing godliness not acting honestly.

But to return to my narrative. One Lord's day, being ordinance Sunday, as I felt such a heavy weight of guilt upon my conscience, I went to the minister and told him I had better not come to the table for I felt more like one desperate. I would beat my breast many times with anguish of spirit. He reproved me, and said it was necessary to come to the table to ease me of my distress; moreover, he said, "I hear you go in the stables and outhouses crying and groaning, with the open Bible in your hand. I cannot think the reason. May I deny it if I hear it said again?" I replied, "Yes;" thus, I grieve to say, he extorted a lie from me. I have thought on what our Lord said to the Pharisees—"They bind heavy burdens that they do not touch with one of their fingers." None can know what deep conviction of sin is but those who have tasted the wormwood and the gall. Sometimes, in the midst of my sorrows and distraction of mind, some portion of God's word would recur to my mind that gave me a transient hope. There was mercy, and

that stimulated me to persevere. From the book of Daniel iii. 24, 25, I received more comfort than I can express—"The king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Meditation on this portion of God's word melted my spirit with love to the dear Redeemer. I saw by the eye of faith His holy Majesty walking in the midst of the fire with those three worthies, and for a short time my bands were loosed. This was more than forty years ago, and from that day to this it has established me in the belief of the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, as being a glorious truth from Heaven, and commended to my conscience by the blessed Spirit. Also, Revelation v. 6, "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." By these passages of Holy Writ I felt greatly humbled and contrite, being filled with holy awe that I could not account for, only it eased me for a time of the burden of guilt upon my conscience. Then it would return with greater violence, for I felt His holy law condemned me for a sinful thought, and His holiness and majesty pierced me through.

My feelings were best described in Habakkuk iii. 16, "When I heard" (the voice of God in His holy law), "my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble."

At this time I used to search God's Word as for hid treasure, and was on my knees every opportunity. One day my minister took this text, "Is not my word like a fire, and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?" In this text I thought there was something that suited my case. I asked him if he would preach from it again, but finding he did not, I repeated my request. He told me he had searched for it, and turned his box over where his sermons were, but could not find it. I have thought since, had he the contents of that text in his heart, as I had, he would not have wanted to search his box.

Sometimes when passing through these fiery afflictions, and sore temptations, that I cannot name, my blood would seem to chill in my veins, and my hair stand erect upon my head. My poor wife would ask, "What can be the matter with you?" and try to comfort me as well as she could, for at this time she was ignorant of the Lord's work in my soul. As dear Kent said, mine was a wound in my soul, a deep-rooted heart-malady. I heard a man talking about the temptations of the devil. I listened, and asked myself, Is there any one who knows anything about what I am passing

through? I afterwards went three or four miles in search of this man at his work, to interrogate him with reference to my troubles and temptations, but, poor man, he could do me no good; and I came away as confused as ever.

I went into a field at Ingatestone, at about half-past ten o'clock at night, feeling all the horrors of a poor, guilty criminal, to pray to Almighty God. When I reached a stile I thought I would fall on my knees; the devil said I should not pray, and I told him I would pray. I cannot tell the reader what a combat the enemy of my soul and I had, but he threw his fiery darts so thick and fast that I thought I could smell the brimstone of the bottomless pit. I said, "Surely if this is hell I have got it in my conscience." At that time the devil frightened me off my knees; though he had often tried before I don't remember that he had ever succeeded. I will mention one or two more of the Lord's merciful deliverances, snatching me as a brand from the burning, and though some may wonder at my ignorance, yet it is strictly true. I still continued a member amongst the Independents—a people who could not read the handwriting on my soul; but a woman who feared God, hearing of the distress I was in, said it was a law work; still I no more knew the meaning of the word than if it had been Arabic. I thought I would not mind where I went could I but find my path traced out.

About two and a half miles from Ingatestone there was a handpost in Stock Lane; I used to

get there about half-past twelve at night. That was represented to me as the cross on which my dear Lord was crucified. I used to drive close to this post and hang round it, begging for mercy for me, a poor, lost, lost sinner! Yea, I would cry as many as twenty times for mercy. O, Lord, have mercy on me, a miserable sinner! This I have done many times. What will not a poor sinner do when the terrors of the Almighty have taken hold of him? Sometimes I imagined I should not be able to attend to my employment, and I had no other resource but my labour. Even if I had had a business at that time, I could not have attended to it, the thoughts of my soul and eternity were like great weights pressing me down. One day, when sitting in the body of the chapel at Rochford, a respectable man named Barnard sat in the next pew to mine—when the sermon was over, I reached over into his pew, took his hat and left mine in my pew. He came away after me, saying, “William, you have taken my hat.” I felt so ashamed of myself.

I fear my reader will be tired of hearing my tale of woe, but unless we know something of the bitterness of sin here, we shall assuredly lay under the wrath of God through a never-ending eternity; for “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth (here), and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” I could truly say, “Unless the Lord had been my helper my soul had dwelt in silence.”

I will mention one other circumstance that

took place while passing through these dark regions of anguish and fear. A person lent me a book, "Boston's Fourfold Man's Estate," and the latter part of that book, describing the punishment of the lost in hell, said they had a body prepared, that they might swim in the wrath of God. This was adding fuel to the fire in my breast. I read the book till I could read no more ; my hair seemed to stand on end, and my blood to chill in my veins. I went up into the room where I slept, and stripped naked, except a small piece of flannel on my loins, it being about four o'clock in the morning, to pray to Almighty God to have mercy on my distracted, horror-stricken soul ; and blessed be His great and holy Name, He did not let me sink, but brought me up again from these depths of affliction by again and again giving me some intimations of mercy.

Another time, when in my little garret, worn out with grief in trying to pour out my soul to the Lord, I fell asleep. When I awoke I felt as if I was full of devils. At this time I used to read God's word daily, and particularly the Psalms. The 7th and 8th verses of the ninetyeth Psalm suited my case—"For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Also, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice ; let thine ear be attentive to the voice of my supplication." Again, "My heart is sore pained

within me, and the terrors of death are fallen upon me; fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me." These and many other passages of Scripture were so exactly in harmony with my feelings that I was as familiar with them as with my native language.

I now come to the night previous to that never-to-be-forgotten great deliverance the Lord wrought for my poor sin-burdened soul. I left Ingatestone at twelve o'clock at night as usual, and was on my knees all the way to Rochford, except when I gave the bags in at the different post offices. I have said, and I believe it to be true, that no Arminianism can live in these fires; it will burn up his dross and tin. I struggled hard to work out a righteousness to screen my guilty soul, and compensate justice, but, as dear Kent says—

"Nought but the grains of Gospel gold
Will ever stand the trying day,
When, like a scroll together roll'd,
The starry heavens shall pass away."

During this journey Satan seemed let loose upon me. When I left Wickford, about ten miles from Ingatestone, my senses left me for a short time, and I thought I should sink to rise no more. But, bless His great and holy Name Whose unbounded mercy was over my benighted soul, and Who heard my cries out of the low dungeon and set me in a large room of Gospel liberty, the next evening—O blessed night!

never to be forgotten!—on my return, about one mile from Wickford, I felt a sweet sensation come over me, and such a light shine round about me, yea, in me, which I cannot describe. It was a dark night in the winter season, about eight o'clock, when the thirteen following verses of the seventh chapter of Luke's Gospel entered my soul:—

“And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

“And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

“And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

“Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

“And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

“There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

“And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?

“Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

“And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

"Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

"My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

"Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

"And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven."

I cannot describe my feelings at that time. Under the heavy bondage of the law my heart had been like stone, but now it became like wax before the flame. The whole scene was revealed to my understanding in such a glorious way. I saw by faith the Lord enter Simon's house; afterwards the woman that was a sinner standing behind Him, weeping, and washing His feet with tears and wiping them with her hair. My eyes overflowed with tears of holy contrition, meekness, and godly sorrow. Mr. Hart has well described it—"Love and grief compound an unction." As our blessed Lord said unto her, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," so He said to me, "Thy sins, yes, thy sins are forgiven thee."

I have compared the impression to a hot iron upon a seal; it was the engraving—the sealing of the Spirit upon my soul. Was she a five hundred pound debtor? So was I. Did she wash His feet with tears? So did I in my feelings, and anointed His dear head with ointment. Did she love Him much, because much was forgiven? So did I. In a word, I embraced the dear Lord Jesus by faith, and clasped Him to my bosom as my Lord and my God. O glorious night! ever

to be remembered. I could say, "I have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth." Thus, dear reader, have I given you a little account of being translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. My heavy load of guilt was removed, darkness was changed for light, bondage for liberty. The law's loud thunders, that said, Pay me what thou owest, were hushed to a calm, and holy peace ensued, by the peace-speaking blood of God's dear Son. Assuredly "Old things were passed away, and all things were become new."

My former dejected and miserable countenance became brightened, my load of guilt that pressed so heavy on my conscience was gone; my poor body, that had been brought low by reason of depression of spirit, was strengthened. So great was the change that I became town talk. All along my route with the mail cart the people observed, "What a change has taken place in the mailman! We thought he was going crazy, but here he is in his right mind." I recollect one day, a man who knew me well, and had seen much of my distress, for I could not conceal it, said to me, "We thought we should see you tagged up." O matchless grace, wondrous love! that brought my soul out of those depths of misery! It is written, "The Lord trieth the righteous. I was brought low, but he helped me." I would just say, for the encouragement of those who may read of the Lord's dealings towards me, do not distress yourselves because you

have not sunk so low and been so sorely tempted as myself ; but, as Mr. James Barry wisely said, " Bless the Lord if he has brought you an easier way."

I well remember that one day, when I was much cast down, and feeling my abject condition as a poor, helpless, guilty sinner, I thought I would seek relief in prayer. I fell on my knees, and besought the Lord to appear for me ; when a sweet spirit of prayer and supplication was poured upon me, and part of Revelation xxii. 14, powerfully entered my soul. " That they may have right to the tree of life." O how blessedly did I feel that, by being united to Christ, a member of his mystical body, I had a right to those blessings I was pleading for ! O this glorious union is better felt than described ! " Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Bless His holy Name for matchless love.

But to return. I still continued with those people at Rochford, nor did I know one who knew anything about bondage or liberty. But I kept close to the Scripture of truth, and searched it as for hid treasure, and the Holy Spirit gave me such an appetite for the Word of God, and by little and little gave me such an understanding of the doctrines of the Gospel—distilled them, as it were, into my soul like holy fragrance and sacred dew that I could not account for, and as I had never heard them preached. As they flowed in I spoke them out, and one day I was truly

surprised at myself, as I stood in the chapel yard at Rochford conversing with the people. I spoke to them of the doctrine of election, and the everlasting love of God to a peculiar people; that His people were predestinated to eternal life before the world began. I told them that the preaching I heard I could not feed upon; as the Lord had given me an appetite for more spiritual food, I could no longer live upon the flimsy doings and duty faith of the creature. They stood astonished, staring at one another. At last the deacon, whose name was Beckwith, looking first at the people and then at me, said, "He will have to go over to Prittlewell." That was a place situated about two and a half miles from Rochford.

There a few God-fearing men and women were met together in a cottage, and a preacher came from London to preach to them once a fortnight. I had heard of these people, but was afraid to go near them. They were called Antinomians, who lived in sin. But I told my wife that the next time the preacher came I would go and hear him. She quite agreed with me, as the Lord had graciously wrought upon her that she could no longer feed where she was; accordingly the next Sabbath we went to Prittlewell and heard the man. His name was Stevens. I had never seen the man before; he was a member of the late Mr. Burnett's Chapel, Baptist minister, Woolwich. He preached at a poor man's house, named Warren. This was in 1823 or 1824. It was a joyful day for me and my wife, as it was the first

Gospel sermon I had heard. His text was from Isaiah ix. 6, "The government shall be upon his shoulders." I looked at the man with astonishment, for he so blessedly and truthfully entered into my feelings, and traced out the work of God in my soul—the bondage I had so long laboured under—the various temptations and fiery darts of Satan—how God could be just and the justifier of the ungodly, and many things that passed between God and my soul. I did not need to ask any one whether it was truth, for I had the witness in my own heart.

The next Sabbath I went to my old chapel, where I had attended six years. The minister had his text and sermon ready. I have no doubt he had been preparing all the week getting his artillery ready; but, blessed be God, his arrows went beyond me. One and another smiled, as they knew who the minister was referring to. I said to the person sitting by me, "You will not see me here any more."

I had heard that a Mr. Collins, of Maldon, was going to preach at Daws Heath, Thundersley. I had never seen him. When I returned from chapel I said to my wife, "Give me a piece of bread and cheese. I am off to Daws Heath." I ran across the fields, which were about five and a half miles. I was rather late. The good man had just taken his text from Daniel ii. 21, "He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." Here I was at home again with the

dear man of God ; he entered into many of the bitters and sweets my soul had passed through, and spoke largely of the work of God in the heart in contrast to the empty profession of Christianity of the day. With emphasis he repeated the lines of Dr. Watts :—

“ He takes the fool and makes him know
The mysteries of His grace,
To bring aspiring wisdom low,
And all its pride abase.”

It knitted and united my soul to the dear man of God, and as he lived till he was ninety-two years old, I long found him a friend indeed.

About this time Mr. Kent's hymns were put into my hands. I shall never forget with what extreme pleasure I read them ; how suitable they were to my case. I could heartily sing that hymn :—

“ Saved from the damning power of sin,
The law's tremendous curse,
We'll now the sacred song begin
Where God began with us.”

Especially when I came to that verse :—

“ Ne'er had ye felt the guilt of sin,
Nor sweets of pardoning love,
Unless your worthless names had been
Enroll'd to life above.”

I also read with delight Bunyan's “ Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners,” his “ Holy War,” and Huntington's “ Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer.” Their writings corresponded so closely to my experience that I felt such a union

of spirit to those dear men of God, whom I never saw, that I wept with joy, and blessed the God of Heaven that he had put it into their hearts to relate what God had done for their souls. I also felt the seventh chapter of Romans to be very precious. I seemed to read it with new eyes and an understanding heart. O how I felt the sweetness of the fourth verse! "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The glorious plan of salvation was sweetly revealed to my enlightened mind, for the threatenings against sin and sinners previously had stood in battle array against me. I could not then discern between law and Gospel—the covenant of works and the covenant of grace; but, bless His everlasting Name, let honours crown His brow! He revealed Christ to my soul, the hope of glory, and taught me by His blessed Spirit to see an end to all perfection in the flesh.

I have already said that the Lord had begun the work of grace in my dear wife. One day her mother was reading from one of Bunyan's works upon the terrors of hell. She was so convicted in her conscience by what she heard read that she rose from her seat to retire, in order to beg for mercy, and thought that at every step she took the bottomless pit was opening to receive her. "Now," she said, "I know the cause of my husband's affliction."

I still drove the mail cart, but often besought

the Lord to open a door for me that I might leave it, as I felt the night air to be very trying, and, bless His holy Name, he heard and answered my breathings. Mr. Jackson, a banker in Rochford, sent for me and asked me if I would live with him. I gladly consented, and remained with him till the banks broke in 1826, when he became bankrupt. Thus far had the Lord provided for me, for He hath said, a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His permission.

After this the Lord opened another door for me with — Fobbs, Esq., Hutton Hall, as coachman. His town house was in Nassau Street, Soho. This brought me occasionally under the ministry of that dear man of God, the late Henry Fowler. The first opportunity I had I tried to find a place of truth. I went to Orange Street Chapel. Seeing a respectable man I asked him where the late Mr. Huntington's chapel was. He told me it was in Gray's-Inn Lane. He did not like the name of Huntington, but, said he, "We come as near the Church of England as we can." I did not stop there, the Lord having made truth so dear I could no longer feed upon the empty profession of the day. I recollect one afternoon, standing in Grafton Street, I heard two men talking upon the subject of religion. I made free to ask them if they could tell me where I might hear the Gospel. The elder man told me I should hear the truth at Upper Gower Street, preached by Mr. Fowler. I went and heard him with pleasure and profit. He so truthfully traced out the ups and downs of a poor, tried child of

God, that I found his ministry truly a blessing to me while in London. I bought a little work, entitled "Fragments of Divinity," at a book-stall, written by Mr. Fowler. That little work was greatly blessed to me, and to my dear wife also. On one occasion I went to Gray's-Inn Lane, and heard Mr. Locke. There I was at home again. Truly "the word of the Lord was precious in those days."

The wise man hath said, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider. God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." So I found it, for in this situation I had many trials. My salary was not sufficient to keep a wife and two children, as I only had eight shillings per week and my board; so that frequently before the quarter's wages were due I have been greatly distressed with anxious fears lest I should bring disgrace upon the cause of God and truth, which was so dear to me. I could appeal to His great Majesty that He had put an honest principle in my heart, and that He knew my needs.

I will mention a wonderful deliverance the Lord wrought for me. I wanted the loan of ten shillings for a week till my quarter's pay became due. I tried to borrow it, but could not; my wife endeavoured to obtain a few things at the shop at which we dealt, but they refused to give us credit for them, although I did not owe them one penny, nor any one else in the village. In the midst of this perplexity the footman came to

the stable and said, "Coachman, you must get the carriage ready and drive the ladies to Colonel Bruce's, at Billericay," which was about three and a half miles. I had two beautiful horses, and perfectly sound to all appearance when they came out of the stable. I drove the ladies there, but when returning home, while walking steadily up the hill, one of the horses began plunging about, and fell down. The ladies were much frightened; they got out of the carriage and returned to Mr. Bruce's, who sent them home in his phaeton. The horse was taken to Mr. Goodman's, Crown Inn, Billericay, and sold. Mr. Goodman gave me ten shillings—just the sum I was so sadly in need of. With what a joyful heart I returned to my wife and gave her the ten shillings! Some persons may think this incident not worth recording; to me it was a striking proof of my Heavenly Father's providential care over me, in supplying my wants. Bless His holy Name, He has been better to me than all my fears.

But to return. In this situation I had many things to groan under. Finding I could not pay my way with only eight shillings a week—and out of that I had two shillings to pay for rent—I asked the Lord to open once more a door for me. When we were at Hutton Hall I had to attend church on Sunday, and as the Lord had in mercy delivered my soul, and given me an appetite for pure truth, this was a sore burden to me. When I entered the church I used to offer up a short prayer, which was, "Good Lord, deliver me from this place."

I had also a very unpleasant affair with the man who supplied the corn for my horses, which may not be out of place to relate ; his name was Wilks. I was fond of horses. When I went to live at Mr. Fobbs's, the horses seemed to be in a poor condition. I told Wilks I thought his measure did not hold the corn allowed me, but he said it held more. I sent into the village and procured a genuine measure, and then said, "Now fill your measure and empty it into this." He began to crowd it into his measure. I said, "Fill it as you have always done before." The result showed a great deficiency. I mention this to show what a dishonest system is often secretly carried on for gain, cruelly robbing poor dumb animals of their food. "A merciful man showeth mercy to his beast." Then I blessed the Lord for putting an honest principle into my heart ; conscious that I was no better by nature than Wilks. I soon perceived that I had excited a spirit of enmity in the man against me, and he told the ladies I was a "meetener."

I will now tell my reader how I schemed when in this place to meet amongst God's dear redeemed, as I secretly longed for the sanctuary where His honour dwelleth. About four and a half miles from Hutton, there was a little cause of truth, called Ramsden Crays. I felt such a desire to meet with them. About the same distance lived my wife's friends. On Sunday morning I would go to my master and ask him if I might go and see my friends. "What have they got to give you ?" he would

inquire. "Nothing, sir, but I want to see them." He supposed I was alluding to my wife's friends, but I meant my spiritual friends. At that place I once heard dear William Gadsby, whose memory is dear to me. His text was—"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews iv. 12). It was a powerful and discriminating discourse, which I have never forgotten, and it was much blessed to myself and others. In this situation, as I said before, I had many trials. My general resort for prayer was the hay-loft, and there I had many sweet seasons in pouring out my complaints before the Lord. Those words in that loft were very sweet to me, "Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt." I said, "Lord, take me, take me to Thy dear Self;" but Mr. Kent says—

"Down from thence we must retire,
To pass through tribulation's fire."

One day, when I rose from my knees, I saw a boy. I felt greatly ashamed. The fact is, I did not wish any one to see my devotions.

I came to a conclusion to leave this place. The squire was loth to part with me. After leaving I did not know whither to go. In August, 1828, I went down to Rochford, to my friend, Mr. G. Winterbon, and told him of the position I was in. He said, "If you go down to Great Waker-

ing and can get a shop, I will send you fifty pounds' worth of goods to stock it, and you shall sell for me by commission." I did so, and commenced my new business on September 1st, 1828. The first year I was successful, and my affairs under Providence wore a more pleasing aspect; but I soon sank again, with a poor, afflicted wife and family. For ten years matters grew worse and worse. I often thought of what good old Bunyan says—

"The Christian man is seldom long at ease:
Soon as one trouble's o'er, another doth him seize."

So I found it, but bless His great Name, these afflictions were the means of keeping me close to the throne of grace, in prayer and supplication, day and night. As the Lord had given me a tender conscience, I feared getting into debt, and as I sold by commission, my profits were small.

I recollect one day I felt very rebellious and dissatisfied, and, being determined to do better, thought I would try and set up for myself. I had a recommendation from a gentleman to a wholesale draper in London, so I started off to the metropolis, and gave in my recommendation. The draper looked at me, and said, "Have you any money?" "No, sir," was my reply. "Then," said he, "we cannot open an account with you." I left his house, and walked about London till a pain struck my knee; I could walk no farther, so returned home very dejected, thinking, "Surely all these things are against me." But afterwards, O how I saw the goodness

of the Lord, and blessed His sacred Majesty again and again that the gentleman did not let me have the goods. I knew but little of the trade, and most probably should have become bankrupt. Thus I could see what a deliverance the Lord had wrought for me ; but how hard it was to stand still when in such difficulties, for I found in spite of all my efforts that my expenses exceeded my income.

Shortly after this there was a house and shop, with an oven, to let ; and I, being a baker by trade, thought I would try it, and, like dear Warburton, keep some pigs. I began to consider upon my prospects of getting custom. " Surely," thought I, " this and that person will deal with me, and though they may not be able to take all, yet as I believe they are united to me in spirit, they will encourage me and take what they can." I ventured to leave one man a loaf without an order, thinking he would certainly deal with me, but when I went again the person he lodged with said, " You are to leave So-and-so no more bread." This eventually taught me a lesson, for I saw that I was foolishly putting confidence in the creature, and casting the net on the wrong side. Bless His dear and holy Name, He hath said, " Let me be your confidence, and put not your trust in princes."

I soon found I could not succeed in this trade, for the afflictions of my dear wife and children, and my other little trade pressed hard upon me. Then did I tell the Lord as well as I could all my trouble, that, as He had put His fear in my heart,

I could not bear to dishonour His great name by being in debt.

But to return. Soon after this my grocer, who knew me very well, brought a friend of his, a currier, to see me. He asked me if I thought I could sell leather. He would bring me in fifty pounds' worth, and I should sell for him upon a commission of two shillings in the pound. I did so, and though I knew nothing of the trade, yet the Lord was pleased to give me a good insight into it, and which means He blessed for my temporal wants, and some years I worked for him very comfortably. Afterwards I found a covetous spirit working in him. The more I sold for him the more he oppressed me ; like Laban, he wanted to change my wages and give me one shilling and sixpence in the pound instead of two shillings. He would also give me short weight, and make me sell his goods at an enormous price. Then I cried unto the Lord in my trouble, and besought Him to deliver me from this labour.

I will mention one instance to show the character of this man. I had a good customer in Foulness Island named King, who used to come seven or eight miles for his leather to my house. He complained of the distance he had to carry the leather after purchasing it ; he was an honourable man, and I feared to lose him. I said to Mr. —, the currier, " Will you take my customer, Mr. King, thirty pounds' worth of leather, and leave it at his house on my account ? " He said he would do so. I expected to receive my commission, about three pounds, but he refused to

give me anything. It was a terrible blow, as I so much needed the money. I told my customer, Mr. King, to weigh the goods directly he received them, as I had proved Mr. — to be a dishonest man. He did so, and found he had been charged four pounds more than his goods amounted to. These afflictions drove me to the Lord, and at times I was enabled to pour out my distresses, and show Him my trouble; and bless His great and exalted Name, He heard my groaning—for the more I was afflicted the more it sent me to the mercy-seat—that the Lord would deliver me from this labour, which He did in His own good time. If I recollect rightly he sent the man two more loads of goods, and as they were both short in weight, he would have no more of him. Thus the Lord appeared for me and overruled it for my good, as my customer returned to me again, and continued dealing with me to the day of his death. “Whoso is wise, and will observe these things; even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.”

It was during these ten years of troublous times I wrote my “Pilgrim’s Hymns.” I trust my reader will bear with me if my narrative appears somewhat incomplete and disconnected, as I have kept no diary; it is written entirely from memory.

In one month I lost by death three dear children, and though I painfully felt the stroke, yet the Lord supported me. A more painful bereavement awaited me, for in December, 1837, I lost my dear wife, and six weeks afterwards my

last and only child, eleven years of age, named Ruth. After taking medicine Ruth caught a cold, and inflammation following, she died. What inexpressible grief I felt! How her every groan pierced me through! Oh! how I begged of the Lord to spare her, and said, "Is she not a little one?"

I bitterly experienced the truth of an expression I once heard that dear man of God, Mr. Philpot, make, namely, that "The sovereignty of God is not learned in a summer parlour, but by terrible things in righteousness." To have the doctrines of grace on lip and tongue in a flippant manner, and to learn them in the furnace of affliction, are very different things. I have many times trembled in myself when reading of the destruction of the seven nations in the land of Canaan to make room for literal Israel.

But to return. This was the last of nine children, leaving me quite alone. Sometimes I thought I should sink under the bereavement, and I should have done so had not a faithful, covenant God supported me. When standing up in my shop bemoaning my lonely and abject condition, with much self pity, these words were powerfully applied to my soul, "He will not always chide." Blessed be God, they communicated strength to my sinking spirits, and comfort to my desolate heart.

I felt I could no longer remain in the house, so I spoke to Mr. Smith, a builder, who had been kind to me in my affliction, and he offered to let me a cottage and make it convenient for a shop. He did so, and I removed into my new residence.

As I have already said, one of my greatest trials, from which I could not deliver myself, was continually being in debt. The Lord, for wise purposes, was pleased to sharply exercise me in these various afflictions. When my friend, Mr. G. Winterbon, had gone over my accounts, I found I owed him ninety-four pounds sixteen shillings and ninepence. Oh! how my spirits sank within me when I knew what I owed the dear man! What sighs and groans I poured out at the mercy seat, that the Lord would enable me to pay the debt! I could appeal to the Lord that He had put an honest principle in my heart, and that if He gave it me I would pay Him every farthing, for wherever I went I secretly took my debt, so that when Warburton's "Mercies of a Covenant God" made their appearance, it was a very reviving cordial to my wounded spirit; I could feelingly enter into his sorrows and joys. I wept before my creditor, and begged he would not break me up, telling him if he would draw up an agreement I would try, the Lord enabling me, to pay him twenty shillings per month; but how it was to be done I could not tell. I gave up selling for Mr. Winterbon and began for myself. He took his goods away and the agreement was drawn up and signed by Mr. Gilson, baker, June 1, 1839. Blessed be God, it was all paid by April 1, 1850, when I paid the last ninepence. Have I not cause to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all his benefits?" for He heard my cry and delivered me out of this long affliction. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence

in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes!" So I have many times found it, and yet my foolish heart is ever hankering after created objects.

I will now tell my reader how the Lord enabled me to cancel the debt, for who can tell but this little account of the Lord's gracious dealings with one so obscure and insignificant may be made useful to others who are travelling through this vale of tears? I have before stated that I lost by death my dear wife, December, 1837. In April, 1839, the Lord graciously provided me with another partner, who loved and feared His holy Name, but I had much to pass through before this was accomplished. Bunyan speaks of the pilgrims' coming to a plain called Ease, but the pilgrims said they were soon over that; and so I found it. Her father and several of my friends thought I acted wrongly in taking a person so much younger than myself, and he was determined it should not be. They thought my second marriage, instead of getting me out of debt, would but involve me still more deeply. But I told one of my friends I believed it was the means the Lord had designed to bring me out of my affliction, as I had made it a matter of prayer to the God of all my mercies that He would provide me with a partner who, like Rebekah, feared the God of Heaven; for she said, "If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are daughters of the land, what good will my life do me?" So did I make my supplication to the Lord, and felt I had not

erred in what I had done. Nor have I ever had cause to regret the union, but have blessed the Lord hundreds of times for providing me such a helpmeet, and can say, to the honour of His great Name, we have lived in the fear of God and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Bless His great and Holy Name for matchless love to one so unworthy! How great is His goodness towards them that fear Him! Whoever reads this little account of the Lord's mercies towards me, when my poor body is mouldering in the grave, may it so encourage you to bring your hard cases to the Lord, Who hath said, acknowledge Me in all your ways and I will direct your steps, and live in peace, and the God of peace shall dwell with you.

Thus we were married on the 21st of April, 1839, proving that the counsel of the Lord shall stand. It was twelve months before my dear wife's father was reconciled to us. The first time of going down Rochford Street he gave me a hearty shake of the hand, and when my dear wife went to see him he gave her a hundred pounds. This enabled me to purchase my own stock and set up for myself, and then to pay that heavy debt, ninety-four pounds sixteen shillings and ninepence, which had cost me so many sighs and groans. How I would, in my simple way, tell the Lord the gold and the silver were His, and as He had put an honest principle in my heart, which I never had till grace wrought it in my soul, beseech Him that He would give me a sufficiency to pay my way that I might not dis-

honour His great and holy Name. Thus did God hear my groans and so mysteriously deliver me out of this affliction. Have I not cause to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all His benefits?" "Who exercises judgment for the oppressed, who giveth food to the hungry." As for the poor man I sold leather for, after I left him he sank in his circumstances, and soon afterwards died. Thus hitherto hath the Lord helped me.

I will now give my reader a little account of how I came to speak in the Lord's great Name—of the leadings of Providence that drew me thereto. Soon after the Lord blessed my soul with pardoning love, I felt it so impressed night and day with a desire to tell poor sinners what He had done for my soul, that I begged of God to remove it, as I deeply felt my ignorance and weakness, and the importance of standing between the living and the dead. This was about the year 1833. We used at that time to meet on the Lord's-day at a poor man's house for reading and prayer, there being no Gospel ministry in the place. One of the friends commented upon the Word and urged me to assist him, but I felt my weakness, and the fear I should do wrong kept me back. He still repeated his desire for me to take a part. One evening I said I would try and read a chapter. It was the fourth of John's Gospel. I did so, and commented upon it. I felt my mouth opened and my heart enlarged, and had the witness in my soul that I had experienced the truths I then testified of.

I was still a hearer of my dear old friend, Mr. Collins, when he came to Thundersley, which was once a month, but the distance being ten miles, and I often weighed down by family affliction, I could not always attend. After this I had a little business to transact at Burnham, and at that time there were a few of the Lord's poor met for worship in a room. My dear old friend, Mr. Collins, preached to them once a month, and, having to stop the evening, I met with them for prayer; as they knew I had commented a little upon the Word they wished me to do so again. As soon as they asked me my trembling and shaking came on, but as the Lord strengthened me, I read and prayed, and commented a little upon the Word; the people expressed themselves comforted and edified, and desired me to come again. Occasionally I went over and read, and prayed, and expounded, and they testified that the Lord had blessed the Word, and invited me to come once a month. But I had daily such a sense of my ignorance and insufficiency, that after I had done speaking I could have hid my head from the people, and thought I could never speak again. The friends were still very pressing, and several testified that the Lord had blessed the Word, and wanted me to go into the pulpit; but the thought of it would cause me to tremble and shake, so that I dared not do so. I did not confine myself to a text, but commented upon the Word as the Spirit gave me utterance.

In 1838 there was a small chapel to let, formerly belonging to the Wesleyans, and a dear old

friend, Mr. James Lewes, who was one of the founders of the cause, hired the chapel, the one we meet in now. After this I sank fathoms deeper in my own estimation, imagining I never could go into the pulpit, and the thought of having put my hand to the plough and looking back filled me with terror. I was deeply exercised, and cried earnestly to the Lord to show me if I erred, or dishonoured His great and holy Name, in proclaiming the wonders of redeeming love. I told Him that He knew my heart, that I did not do it for gain, as I received nothing for my services, nor did I wish for anything; I thought I was well paid if He made me in any measure a help to His poor, afflicted people.

This drove me to the throne of grace to beg of God to solve my hard questions. One evening I recollect I was under great fear and heart-searchings, even to despondency. I arose from my seat and called upon His holy Name, and told His dear Majesty that if I sinned in speaking in His great Name that He would take away the ardent desire, or give me some token of His approbation, and O, bless His dear and exalted Name! almost before I had done speaking, the words were powerfully applied to my soul, with such glory and majesty, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." Bless His dear Name He hath fulfilled that promise, although it has been by terrible things in righteousness. Thus did I enter the pulpit at Burnham, and all fear of doing so was taken away. My first text in the chapel, if I recollect rightly, was from 1 Chronicles xxix. 3,

“Moreover because I have set my affections to the house of my God.”

After this I had several calls to supply different places—Rayleigh, Billericay, Witham, Foulness Island—and at times have had sweet testimonies that my feeble ministry has not been altogether in vain in the Lord; but this I would leave in His dear hands, as He is the best judge of my being made useful to His poor, afflicted people. This I know and feel, that I have been a poor and an unprofitable servant.

I will now return to my narrative. After I was settled in my business, and selling for myself, for a short time things wore a smoother aspect, but the Lord told His dear disciples, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” So I have found it, for He was about preparing me for a lengthened bodily affliction, so that my life was despaired of. In September, 1854, I lost my eldest son by my present wife in his fifteenth year, while away from home, by cholera. I felt his loss so keenly, having inherited from my mother a most sensitive nature, that I could not restrain my feelings. Those bursts of grief shook my nervous system, and though dear friends tried to comfort me, yet was I so depressed, I felt as if I would harden myself in sorrow.

About this time that dear man of God, Mr. Congreve, had a similar trial in the loss of his only son while from home; and those lines he penned in the *Gospel Standard* were made very consoling to my wife, and I trust soothed a little my sorrowing path, for I plainly saw that the same

afflictions were accomplished in my brethren that are in the world. O how I could enter into the dear man's feelings when he said—

“ Little did I think the last time I saw him I should see him no more until I saw him in his coffin. My heart is ready to break. Were I assured of meeting him above my soul could rejoice, notwithstanding my disappointed hopes ; but I must leave it. I desire to bow to Divine Sovereignty. O who can describe the feelings of a tender Christian parent in such a case ! I had hoped to see him called by grace, and made a witness, Lord, for the truth ; but now my child is in death's embrace, my prayers are in vain. Lord, can it be thus ? ”

As I said before, how I could sympathise with this dear, afflicted saint !

I will just mention a circumstance which some might think simple, but it has often been a source of pain and mortification to my feelings. In 1847 it was announced that Mr. Philpot and Mr. Abrahams were to preach at an anniversary at Chelmsford, and as I felt such a union with Mr. Philpot I thought nothing should deter me from going to hear him. But when I arrived at Chelmsford, I was so beside myself, and the thoughts of seeing Mr. Philpot and hearing him preach so filled me with carnal excitement, that, as dear Warburton said, I hardly knew whether I was standing on my head or my feet. Mrs. Tydeman pointed out the room to me where Mr. Philpot, Mr. Abrahams, and the rest of the gentlemen were, and I blundered in in such an

unbecoming manner that I felt greatly ashamed, and begged pardon for the intrusion. In the evening I took tea with Mr. Philpot and several ministers, and Mr. Philpot hearing my name said, "Is that the Mr. Westhrop who writes in the *Gospel Standard*?" The fact is, I thought my conduct had grieved him, and whether it was a temptation I must leave, but for years afterwards the thought of my foolishness filled me with pain.

In 1868 my dear wife was reading to me Mr. Philpot's sermon on the straying sheep and the sin-bearing Shepherd. In that sermon he pointed out many things which had been a source of grief to me. Speaking of the strayed sheep he says, "Have you not often gone out of the path through sheer stupidity? Some silly lust, some stupid folly, some miserable, wretched trifle of no more real weight and importance than a straw, has drawn you aside; you have got out of the path, and fallen into some evil which has produced great guilt, and, it may be, will be all your lifetime a source of inward compunction. By some stupid folly by which you were overtaken in some heedless moment, so as to say or do something unbecoming or inconsistent, which you never can forget, and which, if it came abroad, has grieved friends, put a reproach into the mouth of enemies, tarnished your Christian character, and brought upon you misery and vexation. You did not do it wittingly, wilfully, or wantonly, but if I may use the expression, blundered into it through sheer silliness of mind and mere stupidity, as being off your guard."

Thus did Mr. Philpot so experimentally trace out my character, and enabled me to confess my fault, which at times would be a source of grief and pain for twenty-one years. I received this kind letter from him, which I give verbatim :—

“ No. 6, Sydenham Road, Croydon.

“ DEAR FRIEND IN THE LORD,

“ Your letter has only just come before me amongst the *Standard* communications. The circumstance you mention, and it appears to have been a matter of grief to you, had completely escaped my recollection. I perfectly remember preaching at Chelmsford on the occasion you mention, in July, 1847. My text was Ps. lx. 3, 4. I well remember Mr. Abrahams speaking very clearly and very forcibly upon the true and eternal Sonship of Christ, but what you call your blundering way of coming into the room I either did not notice or have quite forgotten. If, then, it will afford you any satisfaction, receive my full assurance of forgiveness which you think it may need. I have felt sometimes, to my shame be it spoken, more humbled under a sense of folly seen by the eye of man, than of sin seen by the eye of God. Even Saul could say, ‘I have played the fool,’ but he never said, ‘Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.’ I am glad that my feeble attempt to set forth the truth of God met with your experience and your approbation. I believe the truth has a warm and a deep place in the heart of every godly man : ‘The secret of the

Lord is with them that fear him,' and there is a certain secret sweetness, life-demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, which attends the truth to the living family of God, of which erroneous and evil men know nothing. It is by this secret, but invincible and overcoming, power that we receive the love of the truth, and are saved thereby, when the erroneous and evil professors fall into ruin and perdition.

"Yours affectionately in the truth,

"J. C. PHILPOT.

"*May 19, 1868.*"

Thus did I receive this truly spiritual letter and felt grateful for the reception of it from one I so highly esteemed for the truth's sake. I omitted to say I heard Mr. Abrahams very sweetly and feelingly.

But to return to my narrative. I told my reader the effect of the loss of my dear son in 1854. Early in the spring of 1855 I was taken with a bilious attack, succeeded by rheumatic fever, from which I greatly suffered, being often sorely distressed both in body and mind. For twelve months I could not feed myself nor get my hand to my head; from this disease I greatly feel the effects to this day. The enemy also thrust sore at me with the words, "Where is now your God?" so, as the Psalmist said, "I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart." Sometimes such a dark and gloomy cloud would be presented to my mind, and faith and patience as to feeling fled—for the pains of my poor dis-

tressed body, my trade declining, the dear Lord hiding His face, which was the greatest affliction of all—that I have thought, “Surely there is nothing but the county house before me.” Oh! I recollect one day being so exceedingly depressed, and the temptations of the enemy so powerful, as to make me have such hard thoughts of God (I mention this reluctantly, yet God may make it useful to some poor, afflicted soul that is passing through these deep waters); he so tempted me to hold up my right hand and curse God’s holy and blessed Majesty! The conflict was sharp. I cannot tell my reader all that passed, but the Lord granted me faith, and I told the enemy I would sooner die in the conflict; and, blessed be God, He enabled me to resist the devil, and he fled from me. That verse of Mr. Hart’s hymn was made very precious:—

“Cheer up, desponding soul!
On Jesu’s aid rely;
He sees us when we see not Him,
And always hears our cry.”

O how many times would I say with Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!” Bless His holy Name, it was a timely help to me—let honours crown His sacred brow. But as the Lord’s time was not yet come, I still kept sinking, and as my pains increased—especially in my head, that at times was distracting—and medical assistance failed, I believed the Lord was about to take down the tabernacle. Under these circumstances I thought

it necessary, as far as I was enabled, to settle my few earthly affairs for my dear wife and children. I was in the act of mentioning two friends who would assist her, and had named one person, but could proceed no further, when the words were powerfully spoken to me inwardly, "Thou shalt not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord;" and, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you." This I heard with much trembling, and vowed a vow unto the Lord, that if He would bring me out of this affliction I would render unto Him the praise of thanksgiving, and that should be my first text. Bless His everlasting Name, though He took His way in the whirlwind and the storm, yet did He fulfil His own gracious promise; but I can truly say with the poet, it was in such a way as almost drove me to despair; my faith was sorely tried. The Lord does not give faith as a toy, or to be used as a plaything, but, as Peter said, "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold, though it be tried by fire, might be found to praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." So I truly found it, for after this I appeared to sink lower, and thought, surely it must be a device of Satan's. Friends would say, "Do you think the Lord will raise you up?" I would reply, "If what I received came from Him He will."

There was the trial—did it come from Him? "Oh! did it come from the Lord?" would often be my anxious inquiry. Yes, although eighteen months of struggling and wrestling elapsed before

it was verified. But, bless His great and exalted Name Who never said to the seeking seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain," He would, in the midst of my conflicts, at times grant me such a spirit of prayer and supplication; and that wondrous prayer of the blessed Lord in the days of His humiliation has been a balm to my wounded spirit—"Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly—if it be possible let this cup pass from me. He went back again, and said the same words." O, I would think, His were drops of blood, mine were drops of water! Thus, in some feeble measure, I could sympathise with a precious Christ, Who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and Who enabled me, in the midst of my troubles, to fill up a little of the suffering that is behind. I shall mention one more conflict I had in this long affliction, my aim being to extol the riches of sovereign grace, and in some small measure to confirm the faithfulness of the Lord to the poor and afflicted in Zion. He hath said for their encouragement, "The needy shall not alway be forgotten, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever." No, matchless grace, not for ever. The man of God said, "Fearfulness and trembling took hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow." So also did I, for in this combat my sword flew out of my hand, as Bunyan says, and Apollyon straddled right across the path. I felt as if I was sinking into the bowels of despair, and as if I must be overcome. Being alone in a room, I called out aloud to Almighty God to have mercy upon me,

and rebuke the devourer. He heard my cry, and gave me power and faith to withstand the enemy, and I said, "Satan, I am a living soul—I am a living soul." Thus the storm ceased, and there was a calm for a time, bless His great and holy Name! How feelingly I could say, "Thou makest darkness and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth, but when the sun ariseth they go into their dens!" He hath said, "What I have shown you in secret, proclaim upon the housetop." O that I could more adore that matchless grace that heard my cry, and delivered me out of my distresses. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

But to return. As I still continued very ill I was recommended a change of air. I had for some years preached, as far as the Lord had given me ability, to a few poor people at Burnham, and they had often expressed a desire for me to live there; there were many things which made me very reluctant to go, but in this painful affliction the Lord made me willing, and, O how I entreated His holy Majesty that He would go before me, and give me a sufficiency of the bread that perisheth, but a large portion of the bread of life! For I had, while passing through these deep waters, many heart searchings, and the Manual of Christian Experience in the Psalms was so applicable to my case. O how oft would I ask, "Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore?"

Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Thus did I cleave to those tried saints of God recorded in His holy Word, and could sympathise with them in their distresses, as well as admire the faithfulness of God towards them, and also towards me, in the intricate path he had called me to travel. He opened many of the hearts of His people to administer to my necessities.

There is one circumstance I feel I must record for the honour and glory of His great Name Who has ever been better to me than all my fears. At Southchurch, about two and a half miles from Wakering, where I then resided, there were a few of the Lord's poor met in a small place a person had built for them; not a very grand structure, for a builder told me it cost under twenty pounds to build it. Nevertheless they met for prayer and reading God's Word, and one of the brethren spoke to them in the Name of the Lord. I opened the place for them, and I recollect my text was Psalm cxviii. 25, "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord! O Lord! I beseech thee, send now prosperity." This was, I think, in the year 1849 or 1850.

A gentleman who resided in London, also a hearer at the chapel in Gower Street, London—I do hope a good and gracious man—came down to Southend for the benefit of his health. After being there a few days he took a ride to Prittlewell and asked at a barber's shop if they could tell him where the truth was preached. The barber was rather surprised at the question, and

told him there were a church and a chapel in the place. He told the lad to drive on to a shoemaker's shop; he did so, and asked the shoemaker if he could tell him where the truth was preached. The shoemaker looked at him and said, "Truth, sir—truth, sir? If you are in search for that you will not find it in Prittlewell. If you go to Southchurch, about two and a half miles from here, you will find a few poor people who meet in a room, and one of the brethren speaks to them." The shoemaker being somewhat struck with his appearance, inquired, "Sir, are you a speaker?" "No," said the gentleman, "I am a groaner." So the next Sabbath he met with the people, and felt a great union of spirit and home feeling. As he entered the room one of the friends was giving out that hymn of Mr. Kent's, the 116th, which the Lord made precious to him:—

"Sold under sin was Paul's complaint ;
He felt its galling load,
When he by calling was a saint,
And rightly taught of God.
Like him we daily feel the same,
And long to be dissolved ;
Oppressed by sins of every name,
How oft are we involved !
But he that feels pollution most,
Defiled throughout by sin,
Will never of his goodness boast,
But mourn the plague within.
Distressed at heart he'll tell his God
He feels it every day,
And to the fount of Jesu's blood
For pardon haste away.

Thus I left Wakering, September 29, 1855, a poor, helpless creature, naturally and spiritually, entirely dependent upon my dear wife and friends to wait upon me. O the groans, and sighs, and supplications that issued out of my heart to the God of all my mercies that winter! I never sympathised with my dear and precious Christ as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief as I did then. How I would think, he went back and said the same words! O wondrous love and condescension in the God of the whole earth! And, bless His holy Name, he heard my breathings and attended to my cry, for in the spring following, as in the days of His humiliation, He was pleased to rebuke the disease, and I gradually gained strength. How I enjoyed once again meeting with the people of God in His earthly courts! I did not know they were so dear to me till deprived of meeting with them.

I think it was in May, 1856, when I paid my vow unto the Lord, and spoke from these words—"I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord." They were the words he spoke to me when I was in trouble. Thus did I prove the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping and a covenant-performing God, notwithstanding my many misgivings, doubts, and fears; and also that He hath not said in vain, it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom, for, when I came to reside at Burnham, I found many things to grieve my spirit in those professing godliness. There was a great lack of the fear of God, which is the only way to depart from

evil. I found some would contend for the doctrines of grace, while their lives were contrary to godliness; others so unstable, as to say one thing and act another.

These things, with many others, pressed upon me, even to the dividing of the Church, for Thou, O Lord, art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with Thee. I was constrained to testify, as far as the Lord enabled me, of the fruits and effects of God's grace on the heart, namely, to depart from evil, and that we could not serve God and mammon; also the difference between the fruits of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit; how God did afflict for sin, and that hundreds of times I had blessed Him for the chastening rod. Indeed the Lord had so purged me in the furnace of affliction that I could not bear the things that are evil, and, like Jabez, my prayer to the God of heaven was, "Keep me from evil that it may not grieve me."

Thus have I left this little account of the Lord's gracious dealings towards me in nature and grace—of the billows that went over me; and may God condescend to bless it to my dear children, and to my children's children, if it be His great will, that they shall see what He did in this day, how He did drive out the heathen, and planted His fear in my heart, and thereby stimulate them in their afflictions to put their trust in God. This is my fervent prayer to the God of all my mercies.

WILLIAM WESTHORP.

MR. WESTHORP'S LAST DAYS.

I shall now give a brief account of the closing days of my dear husband's life. The intense heat of the summer, 1868, greatly affected him, and it was with much difficulty he could walk to the chapel, although but a very short distance. It was evident the Lord was gradually taking down the tabernacle. One evening, while assisting him home after speaking, he suddenly stopped, and, looking at me, he said, "My dear, the truth of God and the doctrines of the Gospel are dearer to me than ever."

His last sermon was preached in July or the beginning of August—I think I shall never forget it—from the words, "The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord." He spoke very sweetly of the last clause—the many spots and places the soul would try for refuge and safety, but the Lord would so purge and refine by terrible things in righteousness that they might only find refuge in His dear Son. He continued for about twenty minutes, and was then quite exhausted. I had an impression that morning his work was nearly done, and at the close of the service a friend gave out that sweet hymn of Kent's—"The Lord's the battle is," and the fifth verse:—

"Beyond this wilderness the milk and honey lies,
Here fiery serpents hiss and threatening dangers rise :
There Eshcol's grapes in clusters grow,
Cheer up, though faint, and forward go—

That goodly land to view, unseen by mortal eye,
 Thy staff and sandals, too, thou shalt with joy lay by.
 The Covenant-Angel still thy guard,
 Shall be thy shield and great reward."

I assisted him home. He sat down, and so greatly feeling his weakness said, "O what a poor, helpless creature I am! I think my work is done!" I instantly said, and felt what I said, "Thy staff and sandals, too, thou shalt with joy lay by."

He smiled, while the tears trickled down his face. The next week he was taken ill—this was in August, 1868—with a slight attack of English cholera, which greatly shook the system, and from which he never recovered. He would say, "What a poor, helpless, sinful lot of lumber I am! Lord, have mercy upon me, and leave me not!" I took up the *Gospel Standard* for May, 1837, and read a few lines. He then penned the following:—

Forsake me not, most gracious God,
 While in this world I stay,
 But, O support me by Thy Word
 And keep me day by day!

Flood after flood I have been in,
 Hard things to me are shown,
 And hostile foes I've felt within—
 My eyes have overflowed.

Give me a meek and lowly heart—
 O may this be my lot—
 To me Thy glorious Self impart;
 O Lord, forsake me not!

"Oh," he would say, "I am no farther yet! I want the same things now sometimes when under depression of spirit." I would remind him

of many things the Lord had brought him through. "Yes," he would reply, "when labouring under the bondage of the law. When I lost by death a beloved wife and nine children—painful afflictions in the Church of God—losses and crosses in business—the Lord sustained and brought me through, and said He would make His goodness pass before me, and His great Majesty has so far fulfilled it, and here I am, surrounded with mercies. O that I could praise, love, and fear Him more!" For some months he suffered much pain in the head; the doctor said it was pressure on the brain. He greatly feared lest he should lose his senses and memory with regard to natural things, and thus be placed in such a childish position, but in spiritual things he was as firm as when in good health. He would often beg of the Lord to preserve his senses. And how graciously the Lord answered his breathings, for he became so much more himself as he neared his journey's end. Sometimes I would tell him how his mind wandered. He would ask if he had sinned in anything he had said, as he would sooner die than sin against God's dear Son—God's dear Son in truth and love.

On the 13th of April he was very restless, a dark cloud, as it were, resting on his mind; he would say, "O my bitter cup—my bitter cup! O the temptations of the enemy, how he throws his fiery darts!" Seeing him so bowed down, I mentioned those words which in a former illness had been made very dear to him, relative to our precious Christ, "Being in an agony, he prayed

more earnestly." "Oh!" said he, "and so have I. Bless His holy Name, to have fellowship in His sufferings is to suffer with Him."

One evening, feeling his worthlessness and lamenting over it, he said, "I want to bring forth fruit to honour my God. I want a little wine of the kingdom." I asked, "Then you have tasted it?" "O yes," he said, "I have had full draughts!

"'I've been indulged that stream to sip
That Zion's City cheers!'"

When writing to his dear friend, Mr. Finch, I asked him if he had anything he would like to say to him. "Yes," he said, "bless the Lord! Tell my brother my days of darkness are many, and the dispensation is dreary; but at times His blessed Majesty comes and cheers and comforts my poor sin-burdened soul. I have sucked sweetness from that passage in Timothy, 'The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.' Also those words, 'Cast down, but not destroyed.'"

Another time, when much cast down, and his countenance picturing grief, I repeated a verse of Mr. Kent's:—

"But why should Heaven's indulgent care,
Amid the general woe,
A single saint, a sinner, spare
Whose heart was loth to go?"

How it touched a chord in my dear husband's breast, and lit up his countenance with love! He cried aloud, "O holy doctrine! holy doctrine! My soul loves it."

May 13th—After reading a letter from his esteemed friend, Mr. Finch, he exclaimed, “He is a true friend and a real brother. What a mercy the Lord has maintained that unity of spirit amidst all the changing scenes of this poor, dying life, and here I am upon my bed of languishing, and can say, Bless His holy Name, although at times sorely beset with temptations, darkness of mind, fiery darts from the enemy, hidings of His countenance, which are the most painful, yet am I in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. For He has put holiness into my heart, therefore does my spirit pant for holiness ;” and, “O that the righteousness of God’s dear Son may be the breastplate of my heart !”

Having been so many months deprived of meeting with the friends in public worship, he had a great desire to do so once more, and break bread with them, but this favour was not granted him ; the Lord was preparing him for the banquet above. On returning home from chapel I told him the Lord had been in our midst, blessing the reading of Mr. Philpot’s sermons. He melted into tears and said, “What hath God wrought ! He hath indeed raised up faithful men for the comfort and edification of His dear people, and for the defence of the truth in this awful day of declension.”

June 13th—I took up a little work, “A Christian Indeed, described in a Letter by Garfen, a Regenerated Mahometan,” prefaced by the late Mr. Fowler. I read it to my poor, afflicted

husband. The Lord greatly blessed it to his ransomed spirit, and brought afresh to his mind the matchless love of God in translating him out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and when I came to those lines:—

“He loved me, He cried,
Hath lived and hath died.
To save such a rebel as I,”

he was overpowered and could bear no more. He spoke of the matchless and electing love of God—a theme so dear to him. “How it shined,” he said, “in this poor Mahometan. And oh, the wonders of redeeming grace! I can say so too, He hath lived and hath died to save such a sinner as I.”

On the evening of that day he was taken worse, and on June 19th I said, “My dear, you are very ill. I think the Lord is about taking down the tabernacle.” He replied, “I think I shall be spared a little longer, but I desire the will of the Lord to be done.” A friend calling to see him said, “You are not tired of the religion of Jesus Christ, and as you have often said, love to a precious Christ, and salvation by Him?” “O no! O no!” was his answer, “bless His everlasting Name!” Then he said—

“To comprehend and fully prove
The depths of everlasting love
A seraph's power must fail;
How then can I its great dimensions ever know,
Or give the full detail?”

Turning his dying eyes towards me, he said,

"O Lord, have mercy on me, a poor, helpless, sinful worm! I want to abound in hope, in love, by the power of the Holy Ghost." Viewing his poor, prostrated body, I replied, "May the Lord give you, if it is His great will, as glorious an entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem, as He did Mr. Peake, of Oakham," whose letters and obituary we had many times read, and found very precious to us both; we had often been refreshed also by Mr. Bourne's letters. He answered me with such an emphasis of feeling, "Amen, says my soul! Amen, says my soul." He several times repeated—

"Jesus, lover of my soul—
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

Then, as if under some temptation, he cried, "Can I give Thee up, my dear Jesus? Can I give Thee up? No, no, never! Nay, I love and revere Thee more."

On Tuesday evening he sank very low, and appeared to shrink at death, saying, "How shall I feel when I come to die? how shall I meet death? O dear Lord Jesus! do come and enlarge my heart! I cannot rest without Thee! Nought can with a precious Christ compare. I want the refreshing streams of salvation." I replied, "A dear saint of God once declared, 'I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord!'" "I can say so likewise, bless His precious Name," he answered, "but nothing can fill up the vacancy of a precious Christ when His sensible presence is withheld. O the lumber that is in my heart!

How low I am sunk! But I thirst and pant for the presence of my precious Saviour."

June 23rd.—He was in prayer nearly all the day; he cried out many times, "Come, come, my dear Lord Jesus! take my ransomed spirit to Thyself. 'Let me to Thy bosom fly.'" A friend calling in to see him, to whom he gave his hand and smiled, the friend remarked, "Now you give us a smile;" to which he answered, "Oh, I shall smile, too." Several other friends called in to bid him good-bye, beseeching the Lord to support him in the swellings of Jordan, to which he gave his Amen, but was too far gone to converse. On Thursday he spoke several times, but so indistinctly I could not catch the words.

June 25th.—His dear children assembled to take their last farewell of their dying parent, who through grace had set them a blessed example, besides giving them godly precepts, of the power of that religion of which God is the author, proving to a demonstration that blessed Scripture, "He that honoureth me, him will my Father honour."

Thus did my dear husband fall asleep in Jesus, on Friday evening, June 25th, 1869, aged seventy-three years, without a struggle or a groan, and was interred in the Chapel-yard, Southminster, where his body rests in hope of a joyful resurrection. My brother, Mr. Brand, of Bungay, buried him, and preached his funeral sermon from the words, "Behold I show you a mystery."

The following letter I received from a beloved brother in the Lord, who is highly esteemed among the circle of friends the Lord has graciously placed him with, and who for many years felt a great union of spirit with the dear departed.

TALITHA CUMI WESTHROP.

"MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD,

"May the grace of the Lord be communicated to you under your present bereavement, Who hath said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' I have thought much of you since it pleased the God of all grace to remove your dear partner from you to that blessed inheritance prepared for him from eternity. You have abundant reason to bless the Lord that you have no cause to sorrow without hope. Though nature feels the loss, yet faith, as in operation by the Spirit of God, causes the soul to exclaim, 'It is the Lord, let him do as seems good in his sight.'

"The dear man of God proclaimed the glorious Gospel amongst us for nearly nineteen years, and if his gifts were not of the highest order, yet he possessed something superior to gift nakedly considered—the grace and fear of the Lord richly dwelling in his heart; so that I viewed him to be the subject of that sweet and heavenly grace, the fear of the Lord, above many whom I hope are the children of God. What he proclaimed in the pulpit he testified in godly sincerity, and could in his measure say, the things I declare unto you are those things I have tasted and handled of the Word of life, and this far supersedes all human eloquence without grace.

"The Lord having, I trust, called me by His grace about the same time He was pleased to call your dear departed husband, I became acquainted with him, and during more than forty years I bless the Lord that nothing occurred to prevent the union between us, which I do hope the Lord first created in our souls.

"And now, my dear sister, may the Lord have you under His paternal care and keeping, and sweetly assure you of that sweet truth, 'Thy Maker is thy husband; the Lord of hosts is his name.' And having such a Husband you cannot come to final poverty, as He in faithfulness has said, 'My God shall supply all your need; out of his riches in glory by Jesus Christ.'

"Yours affectionately in the Lord,

"JAMES FINCH."

